

# Subterfuge & Sabotage

October 16, 2022

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**BIG IDEA - Resistance doesn't roll over easily, often you've got to push back.**

**scripture focus - Nehemiah 5:1-4 NLT** "About this time some of the men and their wives raised a cry of protest against their fellow Jews. They were saying, "We have such large families. We need more food to survive." Others said, "We have mortgaged our fields, vineyards, and homes to get food during the famine." And others said, "We have had to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay our taxes."

Subterfuge (the acts or practices of one who deliberately deceives) & Sabotage (is a deliberate action aimed at weakening a [polity](#), effort, or organization through subversion, obstruction, disruption, or destruction.)

**Is it really darkest before dawn?** No, but the phrase has always given us a sense of hope that we can make it through the darkest of situations KNOWING the sun will rise again. Thomas Fuller wrote in his book, "A Pisgah-Sight Of Palestine And The Confines Thereof." In 1650 he wrote, "It is always darkest just before the Day dawneth."

## **The runner's wall and the swimmer's fog –**

Although both athletes use training and experience as a way to overcome these obstacles, they each need something very specific to make it. For the runner it's fuel or **glycogen**. For the swimmer it's physical, but much more mental, it's clarity or seeing the goal.

## **In 1952, a woman named Florence Chadwick decided to attempt the 26-mile swim between the California coastline and Catalina Island.**

During her swim Chadwick traveled with a team whose job it was to keep an eye out for sharks and be prepared to assist in the event of unexpected cramps, injury, or fatigue.

**Roughly 15 hours into her swim a thick fog began to set in clouding Chadwick's vision and confidence.** Her mother happened to be in one of the boats at the time as Chadwick relayed to her team she didn't think she could complete the swim.

**She swam for another hour before deciding to call it quits.** As she sat in the teetering boat she discovered if she'd just continued on for another mile she would have reached Catalina Island.

**She quit because she had no idea how far her destination lie.**

Two months after Chadwick's failed attempt she tried the swim once more. Once again, a thick fog set in.

**But this time she had a mental image of the shoreline in her mind as she pushed herself along. And not only did she succeed but** Chadwick ended up making the swim an additional two times.

For good measure, Chadwick also became the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions.

**The closer you are to finishing the project or reaching your goal, the more we face resistance and everything seems to intensify.**

**Q:** Have you quit or given up on an idea or project only to find you were very close to a solution or finishing?

For Nehemiah, now that the wall was well on its way to being built, **two things happened: One, people were not only exhausted, they were BROKE! And two, those who were against the rebuild made last-ditch efforts to shut down the project by distracting, conning or killing the leader.** The enemy always fights dirty.

**What do you do if the you face trouble from within and without, with internal & external pressure?**

No one likes to fight a war on multiple fronts, especially not when the struggles are coming from within and without. It is especially hard to keep focused when you're pinned from both sides.

**Observation #1 – You expect enemies on the outside, but rarely from within**

**Nehemiah 5:1-5 NLT**

"About this time some of the men and their wives raised a cry of protest against their fellow Jews. They were saying, "We have such large families. We need more food to survive." Others said, "We have mortgaged our fields, vineyards, and homes to get food during the famine." And others said, "We have had to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay our taxes. We belong to the same family as those who are wealthy, and our children are just like theirs. Yet

we must sell our children into slavery just to get enough money to live. We have already sold some of our daughters, and we are helpless to do anything about it, for our fields and vineyards are already mortgaged to others."

### **Exactly what is going on here?**

We see from verse six that Nehemiah had no idea there were real problems going on in their community and it had been going on for some time.

This plan to take advantage of the people didn't unfold until a number of factors came together. And, instead of figuring out how to supply HELP in a time of need, the rulers and wealthy conspired to take advantage of the crisis!

### **Economy, politics and usury played out, as the enemy of finishing well.**

1. **First, the people face a food shortage**
2. **Second, to get grain, they had to buy it from others. But they had no money, because that had no income while building the wall and there was a famine. They had to mortgage their fields ... vineyards, and homes so they didn't starve.**
3. **Third, not wanting to mortgage their property, they had to borrow money from their Jewish brothers to pay property taxes to King Artaxerxes. The rates to borrow money in a devastated economy and a famine were exorbitant interest rates from their own Jewish brothers.**
4. **Fourth, to repay their creditors they had to sell their children into slavery**

### **Keep in mind that God hates the rich taking advantage of the poor.**

God commanded Israelites to NOT charge interest to their own!

**Deuteronomy 23:19 Do not charge a fellow Israelite interest, whether on money or food or anything else that may earn interest. You may charge a foreigner interest, but not a fellow Israelite,** so that the LORD your God may bless you in everything you put your hand to in the land you are entering to possess.

**The conditions of the times and city coupled with the rebuild project put extra stress on the workers. The average folks, or small businesses that make the city run we're struggling and could only turn to those with wealth and resources, ie: mostly government, civil and wealthy land owners.**

### **Does this sound familiar to anyone today?**

**Q:** These internal struggles of economy, health, or family dynamics are very real. How can we help each other without lashing out and turning on each other?

**Observation #2 – Nehemiah didn't go straight to prayer**

He went mano a mano (hand to hand, man to man bullfighting phrase) or rico a rico (rich to rich).

**Nehemiah 5:6-7 NLT**

**“When I heard their complaints, I was very angry.** After thinking it over, I spoke out against these nobles and officials. I told them, “You are hurting your own relatives by charging interest when they borrow money!” **Then I called a public meeting to deal with the problem.”**

**Once Nehemiah heard what was happening- he realized, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark ...”** *Hamlet, Horatio speaking, (Act-I, Scene-IV).*

<https://literarydevices.net/something-is-rotten-in-the-state-of-denmark/>

**Nehemiah alters his actions! This time, he does not pray and ask God to intervene. This time, he thinks it through and CONFRONTS the nobles!**

**Q:** Nehemiah didn't pray this time. Why do think he didn't?

**Q:** When do you pray verses when do you say something and confront the people causing the problem?

**One of the best leadership lessons out of Nehemiah was based on how he built trust with the people of Jerusalem. He consistently, “said what he was going to DO, then DID what he said he'd DO.”**

**He lets the nobles have it PUBLICLY!**

**Don't you just love it when those who govern, those who are supposed to be public servants are held accountable?**

**Observation #3 – A miracle happens, the nobles do what is right**

**Nehemiah 5:8-11 NLT**

**Nehemiah says what we all want to say LOUDLY...**

**“What you are doing is not right!**

**You must restore** their fields, vineyards, olive groves, and homes to them this very day.

**And repay** the interest you charged when you lent them money, grain, new wine, and olive oil.

**AND WE SAY "AMEN."**

**Nehemiah 5:12-13 NLT**

**"They replied, "We will give back everything and demand nothing more from the people. We will do as you say."** Then I called the priests and made the nobles and officials swear to do what they had promised. I shook out the folds of my robe and said, "If you fail to keep your promise, may God shake you like this from your homes and from your property!"

**The whole assembly responded, "Amen,"** and they praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised."

**Observation #4 – Nehemiah reveals his wealth and modeled generosity.**

**Nehemiah 5:14-18 NLT**

"For the entire twelve years that I was governor of Judah—from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of the reign of King Artaxerxes—

- **neither I nor my officials drew on our official food allowance.**
- **The former governors, in contrast, had laid heavy burdens on the people, demanding a daily ration of food and wine, besides forty pieces of silver.**
- **Even their assistants took advantage of the people.**

But because I feared God, I did not act that way.

- **I also devoted myself to working on the wall and refused to acquire any land.**
- And I **required all my servants to spend time working on the wall.**
- I **asked for nothing**, even though
- I **regularly fed 150 Jewish officials at my table, besides all the visitors from other lands!** The **provisions I paid for each day** included one ox, six choice sheep or goats, and a large number of poultry. And **every ten days we needed a large supply of all kinds of wine.**
- Yet I **refused to claim the governor's food allowance** because the people already carried a heavy burden."

**I have no idea how much money this would have cost Nehemiah at the time! That's a lot of livestock and chickens, not to mention the gallons of wine brought in THREE TIMES during the rebuild project.**

**Q:** Have you experienced someone of wealth but doesn't flaunt it? Did you find them generous as well?

## Observation #5 – **Betrayal is a bitter drink.**

**It didn't just get worse, it just got weird! As if that wasn't enough...**

**The subterfuge was aimed at the people, to divide and wear down their resolve, their morale. The sabotage was specific to Nehemiah as the leader.**

**On three attempts Sanballat tries to sandbag Nehemiah:**

1. **Nehemiah 6:1-4 NLT** "Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies found out that I had finished rebuilding the wall and that no gaps remained—though we had not yet set up the doors in the gates. So **Sanballat and Geshem sent a message asking me to meet them at one of the villages in the plain of Ono.** But I realized **they were plotting to harm me**, so I replied by sending this message to them: "I am engaged in a great work, so I can't come. Why should I stop working to come and meet with you?" Four times they sent the same message, and each time I gave the same reply."
2. **Nehemiah 6:5-7 NLT** "**The fifth time**, Sanballat's servant came with an open letter in his hand, and this is what it said: "**There is a rumor among the surrounding nations**, and Geshem tells me it is true, that **you and the Jews are planning to rebel and that is why you are building the wall.** According to his reports, **you plan to be their king. He also reports that you have appointed prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, 'Look! There is a king in Judah!'** "You can be very sure that this report will get back to the king, **so I suggest that you come and talk it over with me.**"
3. **Nehemiah 6:10-13 NLT** "Later I went to visit **Shemaiah** son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home. He said, "**Let us meet together inside the Temple of God and bolt the doors shut. Your enemies are coming to kill you tonight.**" But I replied, "Should someone in my position run from danger? Should someone in my position enter the Temple to save his life? No, I won't do it!" **I realized that God had not spoken to him, but that he had uttered this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. They were hoping to intimidate me and make me sin. Then they would be able to accuse and discredit me.**"

How very sad! **This man, Shemaiah, was the son of a priest, who was an intimate and confidential friend of Nehemiah.** Worse, the young man **claimed to be endowed with the gift of prophecy.** Prophecy for profit is NEVER acceptable!

**Even as the last pieces of rebuilding the wall was coming together, the enemy didn't stop.**

1. Plot to kill - let's have a peace talk. And come alone!
2. Stir up a perceived disloyalty to the King. Sanballat had no idea just how close Nehemiah was to Artaxerses.
3. Force to run and hide. Let's hide in the temple together, thus declaring guilt and requesting asylum. It is not specified but running into the temple and locking the doors is much like "taking hold of the horns on the altar" in the temple. It was seen as seeking protection from God, when they are being pursued to be killed. **It is interesting that only two people in the Bible are shown to have "taken hold of the horns of the altar" for protection: Adonijah (1 Kin 1:50), and Joab (1 Kin 2:28). Both were seeking protection from Solomon, who sought to have them killed. Of course, the altar was found in the Tabernacle / Temple in the Bible.**

**Q:** Have you experienced betrayal by someone close to you? Were you able to recover?

There is some universal truth about having and facing opposition and obstacles to finish!

It may not always be evil, or the "devil" working against us, but there is always something. **The bigger the dream, idea or project the more problems just show up.** But when those **barriers are PEOPLE**, often those closest to us, it is **far more emotional, and complicated.**

Most people work very hard to overcome these oppositions, these obstacles, even when they come from the people we've trusted to believe in us, and have our backs. But like **Florence Chadwick**, not being able to SEE the land through the fog, we quit with just a mile to go. Nehemiah pushed through all of the barriers, threats, lies, trickery and frustration to trust God and get the job done. A friend of mine, Wayne Tesch always quoted this when doing the impossible, **"if it were easy, everyone would be doing it."**

**Q:** Do you have a big God dream?

Don't quit. Don't give up. Hold on to your godly Dream. Hold on to your faith in a big God who is with you. Pastor Emily Sombrito, in a devotional she brought to our staff meeting, asked a great question. **"Do we want to be a part of God's BIG story?"**

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## NOTES

**Nehemiah Chapters 5 & 6:1-14**

**Is it really darkest before dawn?** No, but the phrase has always given us a sense of hope that we can make it through the darkest of situations KNOWING the sun will rise again. Thomas Fuller wrote in his book, "A Pisgah-Sight Of Palestine And The Confines Thereof." In 1650 he wrote, "It is always darkest just before the Day dawneth."

<https://thecontentauthority.com/blog/what-does-it-is-always-darkest-before-the-dawn-mean>

The runner's wall - <https://www.redbull.com/gb-en/what-is-hitting-the-wall-running>

The swimmer's fog - <https://medium.com/emphasis/youre-closer-than-you-think-a-story-about-long-distance-swimmer-florence-chadwick-99f9cf360b9f>

## **You're Closer than You Think — A Story About Long Distance Swimmer Florence Chadwick**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence\\_Chadwick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Florence_Chadwick)

### **Scriptures**

**Nehemiah 5:1-4 NLT** "About this time some of the men and their wives raised a cry of protest against their fellow Jews. They were saying, "We have such large families. We need more food to survive." Others said, "We have mortgaged our fields, vineyards, and homes to get food during the famine." And others said, "We have had to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay our taxes."

#### **Nehemiah 5:6-7 NLT**

**"When I heard their complaints, I was very angry.** After thinking it over, I spoke out against these nobles and officials. I told them, "You are hurting your own relatives by charging interest when they borrow money!" Then I called a public meeting to deal with the problem."

#### **Nehemiah 5:8-11 NLT**

"At the meeting I said to them, "We are doing all we can to redeem our Jewish relatives who have had to sell themselves to pagan foreigners, but you are selling them back into slavery again. How often must we redeem them?" And they had nothing to say in their defense. Then I pressed further, "**What you are doing is not right!** Should you not walk in the fear of our God in order to avoid being mocked by enemy nations? I myself, as well as my brothers and my



workers, have been lending the people money and grain, but now let us stop this business of charging interest. **You must restore their fields, vineyards, olive groves, and homes to them this very day. And repay the interest you charged when you lent them money, grain, new wine, and olive oil.**"

### **Nehemiah 5:12-13 NLT**

"They replied, "We will give back everything and demand nothing more from the people. We will do as you say." Then I called the priests and made the nobles and officials swear to do what they had promised. I shook out the folds of my robe and said, "If you fail to keep your promise, may God shake you like this from your homes and from your property!" The whole assembly responded, "Amen," and they praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised."

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intimidate us, imagining that they could discourage us and stop the work. So I continued the work with even greater determination. Later I went to visit Shemaiah son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home. He said, "Let us meet together inside the Temple of God and bolt the doors shut. Your enemies are coming to kill you tonight." But I replied, "Should someone in my position run from danger? Should someone in my position enter the Temple to save his life? No, I won't do it!" I realized that God had not spoken to him, but that he had uttered this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. They were hoping to intimidate me and make me sin. Then they would be able to accuse and discredit me. Remember, O my God, all the evil things that Tobiah and Sanballat have done. And remember Noadiah the prophet and all the prophets like her who have tried to intimidate me."

## Questions

**Q:** Have you quit or given up on an idea or project only to find you were very close to a solution or finishing?

**Q:** These internal struggles of economy, health, or family dynamics are very real. How can we help each other without lashing out and turning on each other?

**Q:** Nehemiah didn't pray this time. Why do think he didn't?

**Q:** When do you pray verses when do you say something and confront the people causing the problem?

**Q:** Have you experienced betrayal by someone close to you? Were you able to recover?

**Q:** Do you have a big God dream?

## COMMENTARY REFERENCES

### The Bible Knowledge Commentary

5:1–5. Up to this point Nehemiah's challenges as a spiritual leader focused primarily on those outside of Judah. **But before the walls were finally rebuilt, he encountered the most difficult and intense kind of problem almost every spiritual leader has to face sometime—problems within.** For Nehemiah, those problems centered not on Sanballat, Tobiah, or Geshem but on his own people, the Jews. There were four such difficulties. **First, the people face a food shortage.** They said they needed to get grain for food to keep themselves and their families alive (v. 2). The work on the wall hindered their tending their crops. And this crop failure was called a famine. **Second, others had grain (buying it from others), but to get it they had to mortgage their fields ... vineyards, and homes** (v. 3). **Third, others, not wanting to mortgage their property, had to borrow money from their Jewish**

**brothers to pay property taxes to King Artaxerxes** (v. 4). This problem was compounded by the fact **that they were charged exorbitant interest rates by their own Jewish brothers**. This led to a fourth problem. **To repay their creditors they had to sell their children into slavery** (v. 5; cf. Ex. 21:2–11; Deut. 15:12–18). This of course left them in a hopeless state.

#### **After thinking about it, Nehemiah took swift action**

5:7b–9. After regaining his emotional equilibrium, Nehemiah confronted the situation head on. **First, he rebuked those who were violating God's command not to charge their own people interest (cf. Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:35–38; Deut. 23:19–20)**. Money could be loaned (Deut. 15:7–8) but not to gain interest from another person's distresses. **Second, calling a large meeting, Nehemiah pointed out the inconsistencies of their behavior compared with what he and others in exile had done personally to help their brothers**. He and others had already purchased (redeemed) some indentured Jews who were sold to foreigners (cf. Lev. 25:47–55). But now the opposite was happening; Jews were selling their fellow Jews into slavery. Also **God's reputation was at stake**. This immoral and unethical behavior was bringing reproach on the One who had delivered their country from both Egyptian bondage and Babylonian Captivity. So he exhorted them to live in the fear of ... God (i.e., to trust, obey, and serve Him) and thus avoid the reproach of their Gentile enemies.

5:10–11. Nehemiah's final action was intensely personal. He referred to his own example and that of others who were already helping those in need by lending them money and grain. He was already doing something about the problem. So **he was not asking the people to do something he was not exemplifying in his own life**. Some Bible translations and commentaries suggest that Nehemiah was admitting his own guilt of charging interest on his loans. This, however, seems inconsistent with his high leadership qualities and his charge to the nobles and officials about their guilt (v. 7). Nehemiah then asked those guilty of exploitation to **return what they had taken from others**. Mortgaged fields, **vineyards, olive groves** (the groves are mentioned here for the first time; they were not referred to in vv. 3–5), **and houses were to be returned** (perhaps with the income made from the grain, new wine, and oil from those fields), **charging interest (usury) was to stop, and the interest received from the loans was to be returned**. The interest was a 100th part, that is, one percent a month. He emphasized the urgency of this exhortation by asking them to act immediately.

#### **Bible References on usury**

1. Ezekiel 18:13 He lends at interest and takes a profit. Will such a man live? He will not! Because he has done all these detestable things, he is to be put to death; his blood will be on his own head.
2. Ezekiel 18:8 He does not lend to them at interest or take a profit from them. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between two parties.

3. Exodus 22:25 "If you loan money to my people, to the poor among you, don't be like a creditor to them and don't impose interest on them."
4. **Deuteronomy 23:19 Do not charge a fellow Israelite interest, whether on money or food or anything else that may earn interest. You may charge a foreigner interest, but not a fellow Israelite, so that the LORD your God may bless you in everything you put your hand to in the land you are entering to possess.**
5. Leviticus 25:36 Do not take interest or any profit from them, but fear your God, so that they may continue to live among you.
6. Leviticus 25:37 Remember, do not charge interest on money you lend him or make a profit on food you sell him.
7. Proverbs 22:7 The wealthy rule over the poor, and anyone who borrows is a slave to the lender.
8. Psalm 15:5 Those who lend money without charging interest, and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent. Such people will stand firm forever.
9. Proverbs 28:8 He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.
10. Psalm 112:5 Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely, who conduct their affairs with justice.
11. Proverbs 19:17 Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.

## Dictionary of Bible Themes

**extortion** - Literally "twisting out"; obtaining money, etc., by violence, threats or unreasonable demands.

### **Extortion condemned**

Ps 62:10 See also Ecc 7:7; Isa 10:1-2; Eze 22:13; 1Co 6:9-10

Extortioners can be saved

1Co 6:9-11

### **What God requires from extortioners**

Repentance Lk 3:12-14

**Restitution** See also Lev 6:4-5; Lk 19:8

### **Curses upon those who are guilty of extortion**

Jer 22:17-19 See also Eze 18:18; 22:12-14; Am 5:11; Hab 2:6

### **Blessings upon those who avoid extortion**

Isa 33:15-16

### **Examples of extortion**

1Sa 2:12-17 Eli's sons; 1Sa 8:11-18 the wicked king foretold by Samuel; 1Sa 13:19-21 the Philistines; Ne 5:1-5 the Jews in Nehemiah's day; Eze 22:29 Israel under the kings; Mt 18:28 the servant in the parable; Mt 23:25 the Pharisees; Lk 18:11 sinners in the eyes of the Pharisee; 1Co 5:9-11 some Christians before conversion

## Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible

Nehemiah 6:1-2 (JFB): Ne 6:1-19. Sanballat Practises against Nehemiah by Insidious Attempts.

Then Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me—**The Samaritan leaders, convinced that they could not overcome Nehemiah by open arms, resolved to gain advantage over him by deceit and stratagem.** With this in view, under pretext of terminating their differences in an amicable manner, they invited him to a conference. The place of rendezvous was fixed “in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.” “In the villages” is, Hebrew, “in Cephirim,” or “Chephirah,” the name of a town in the territory of Benjamin (Jos 9:17; 18:26). Nehemiah, however, apprehensive of some intended mischief, prudently declined the invitation. Though it was repeated four times, [Nehemiah's] uniform answer was that his presence could not be dispensed with from the important work in which he was engaged. This was one, though not the only, reason. **The principal ground of his refusal was that his seizure or death at their hands would certainly put a stop to the further progress of the fortifications.**

Nehemiah 6:5–10 (JFB): 5. Then sent Sanballat his servant ... the fifth time **with an open letter** in his hand—In Western Asia, letters, after being rolled up like a map, are flattened to the breadth of an inch; and instead of being sealed, they are pasted at the ends. In Eastern Asia, the Persians make up their letters in the form of a roll about six inches long, and a bit of paper is fastened round it with gum, and sealed with an impression of ink, which resembles our printers' ink, but it is not so thick. Letters were, and are still, sent to persons of distinction in a bag or purse, and even to equals they are enclosed—the tie being made with a colored ribbon. **But to inferiors, or persons who are to be treated contemptuously, the letters were sent open—that is, not enclosed in a bag.** Nehemiah, accustomed to the punctillious ceremonial of the Persian court, would at once notice the want of the usual formality and know that it was from designed disrespect. The strain of the letter was equally insolent. It was to this effect: The fortifications with which he was so busy were intended to strengthen his position in the view of a meditated revolt: he had engaged prophets to incite the people to enter into his design and support his claim to be their native king; and, to stop the circulation of such reports, which would soon reach the court, **he was earnestly besought to come to the wished-for conference.** **Nehemiah, strong in the consciousness of his own integrity, and penetrating the purpose of this shallow artifice, replied that there were no rumors of the kind described, that the idea of a revolt and the stimulating addresses of hired demagogues were stories of the writer's own invention, and that he declined now, as formerly, to leave his work.**

Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah, —**This man was the son of a priest, who was an intimate and confidential friend of Nehemiah.** The young man **claimed to be endowed with the gift of prophecy.** Having been secretly bribed by Sanballat, he, in his pretended capacity of prophet, told Nehemiah that his enemies were that night to make an attempt upon his life. He advised

him, at the same time, to consult his safety by concealing himself in the sanctuary, a crypt which, from its sanctity, was strong and secure. But the noble-minded governor determined at all hazards to remain at his post, and not bring discredit on the cause of God and religion by his unworthy cowardice in leaving the temple and city unprotected. This plot, together with a secret collusion between the enemy and the nobles of Judah who were favorably disposed towards the bad Samaritan in consequence of his Jewish connections (Ne 6:18), the undaunted courage and vigilance of Nehemiah were enabled, with the blessing of God, to defeat, and the erection of the walls thus built in troublous times (Da 9:25) was happily completed (Ne 6:15) in the brief space of fifty-two days. So rapid execution, even supposing some parts of the old wall standing, cannot be sufficiently accounted for, except by the consideration that the builders labored with the ardor of religious zeal, as men employed in the work of God.

## Review

### Review from Chapter One

1. see reality,
2. grieve the loss,
3. do something about it
4. recognize our part of the problem.
5. And together, in the months ahead, asking for God's help and favor.

### Review from Chapter Two – first half

1. God is at work
2. Use the time to prepare
3. Let godly character and wisdom guide us
4. Take ownership - Our city, Our people
5. Be ready with plan

### Review from Chapter Two – second half

1. You've got to see **who** you are up against
2. You've got to see **what** you are up against

3. You have to **make people see the truth!** Where they are and where they could be.
4. **Not everyone will join** and some may openly oppose you and the plan.

### Review from Chapter Three

1. Leaders go first.
2. People really matter to God, they should matter to us.
3. A commitment from all, no matter how large or how small, will eventually build the wall strong and tall.

### Review from Chapter Four

1. Opposition starts with verbal mockery
2. Reflect on words, but redirect them to God
3. Physical threats normally follow verbal threats
4. Exhaustion weakens resolve
5. Enemy chatter will increase, but so can our faith
6. Be Ready and Resolved

### Review from Chapters Five & Six

1. You expect enemies from the outside, but rarely from within
2. Nehemiah didn't go straight to prayer, he spoke to power
3. A miracle happens, the nobles do what is right
4. Nehemiah reveals his wealth and modeled generosity
5. Betrayal is a bitter drink.